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Volume 8

Number 10 *The Iowa Homemaker* vol.8, no.10

Article 4

1928

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Recommended Citation

Thomas, Frances (1928) "Spring Renovating," *The Iowa Homemaker*: Vol. 8 : No. 10 , Article 4.

Available at: <http://lib.dr.iastate.edu/homemaker/vol8/iss10/4>

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Spring Renovating

Frances Thomas

One glimpse of the first bluebird, the sight of the first courageous tulip pushing its way through the ground, and one breath of balmy, spring air causes the housewife to gaze with distasteful eyes upon the countenance of her winter-worn house. Immediately her soul is beset to that thing dreaded by every masculine mind, "spring housecleaning."

To our grandmothers, housecleaning meant a thorough cleaning from attic to basement that upset not only the house itself but the mental equilibrium of every member of the family. Furniture was moved from every room, while pictures were taken down, rugs were put on the line for a religious beating, woodwork and floors were unmercifully scrubbed and curtains were washed and put in stretchers to dry—all to be put back in the very same spot at the end of the cleaning period.

To the modern housewife spring housecleaning has a somewhat different meaning. It is her idea not so much to change material things as to change the atmosphere of the whole house from that of winter to one of airy spring and summer. As a first requirement, she, like our grandmothers, requires cleanliness for does not spring herald us with an atmosphere of freshness and cleanliness.

Due to modern conveniences as the electric vacuum cleaner and its attachments, rugs and curtains do not need beating and washing as much as they require a bath in spring air and sun-

shine. While these are absorbing as much spring atmosphere as possible, the housewife dons a smock (even friend husband has to admit that a gay flowered smock is becoming though his spouse may be cleaning house in it) and collects her rejuvenating materials. Paint, wax, enamel, varnish, wall paint and patching cement are some of the essential things.

After patching up cracks in the ceiling and wall and refreshing them with wall paint or fresh wall paper, the next consideration is woodwork. A bit of soap and water applied with plenty of "elbow grease" works wonders and a fresh coat of paint does even more. Each housewife has her own pet idea of how her floors should be finished, but whether shellac, lacquer or varnish is put on thinly before the wax, makes little difference if the housewife has an electric waxer to finish the task. If she does not own one, frequently she may rent one at a small cost and she will feel well repaid by not having to endure the torture of sore knees and back.

Draperies and curtains are perhaps the most interesting things in spring housecleaning. Here the ingenious housewife may make good use of the dye pot. Natural colored theatrical gauze can be dyed a lovely red orange by dipping the material in common orange dye. This material is so wide and so inexpensive that the housewife can change the atmosphere of her living room or sun porch for very little. Muslins, voiles and marquisettes can also be plunged into dye

baths to brighten them. Cretonne is always good and slip covers for chairs and davenport can transform a dull wintry livingroom into a spring-like room of cheeriness.

Changing the furniture around in the room helps change the atmosphere. Many housewives hang a few good pictures at a time and change them from time to time. After the walls are cleaned taking down the heavier pictures and putting up colorful, light ones as "The Holland Girl" and the "Dance of the Nymphs" changes the atmosphere of the room.

Crisp gingham curtains ruffled at the sides with tiny ruffled valances invite the sunshine to enter the owners' workshop, the kitchen. A touch of bright colored lacquer to the handles of kitchen utensils creates an atmosphere of newness and adds another note of color.

With a sigh of satisfaction the somewhat fatigued housewife makes an inspection of her rejuvenated home. Everywhere fresh walls, shining woodwork and freshly waxed floors. New theatrical gauze drapes flutter gently at shining windows as the balmy spring air sifts into the living room. Crisp cover slips hide darker chairs and davenport and beckon to the spring sunshine. The bowl of yellow daffodils on the mantel breathes of spring.

Crisp voile curtains, shining woodwork, floors and fresh walls have transformed the bedrooms. Fresh enamel, new curtains and bright notes of color speak of cleanliness in bathroom and kitchen.

From Rags to Hooked Rugs

Gladys Parker Myers '28

Even old rags have their place in the home in this age when all women are especially interested in beautifying the home. Hooked rugs, although they have been made by our great-grandmothers are ever new and fascinating because of the different designs and colors that can be used in them.

As in choosing a dress, the first thing to consider before making a rug is the use for which it is intended and then the size. No one would buy a dress without first deciding for what purpose it is to be used and most often we feel the need of a particular dress before we start shopping. How much more exciting it is to hook a rug for a certain spot than to labor over a rug and then to carry the

completed rug around the house trying to find a place where it will fit in best.

Next comes the designs and, again, the design must fit the space, size of rug, as the design of a dress must fit the wearer. No really large woman would wear a dress made for a small woman but we often forget that there are different designs for the large and the small rugs.

There are two types of design used in hooked rugs—the conventional design which works well in an all-over pattern and the abstract rhythmical flower shapes. The last mentioned suggests a floral design but is in no way realistic. At the present time, baskets of roses and other flowers are not fashionable

in rug designs. Neither are cats and dogs hooked into rugs.

Wool rags are best for hooked rugs, they wear better and take the dyes better than cotton and silk materials. Wool knitted material is especially good, but old blankets, dresses, shirts or trousers are also usable. Silk materials make up into good looking rugs but a large amount of rags is necessary and the rugs are not durable. Cotton does not give a pleasing effect in hooked rugs. If there are not enough wool rags available in the home, cheap materials can be purchased at rummage sales; however, the things bought at a rummage sale should be sent to the laundry before

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